

Working Group VII

Working document 56

Working group VII – "External Action"

Subject: Recommendations on development cooperation by Mr Peter Hain to the discussion on the draft final report of Working Group VII on External Action (WD 021 - WG VII REV 2)

Members of Working Group VII will find hereafter comments by Mr Peter Hain, UK government representative, member of the Convention.

Proposed recommendations for the
External Relation Working Group's final report

- International development should remain an area for which both Member States and the EC have competence but with an increasing degree of collaboration and complementarity between national and Community programmes. Competence should clarify the particular purpose and role of the EC programmes to ensure they also provide added value to those of Member States.
- Poverty reduction is the principal aim of the EC's development policy and concerns all developing countries. The EC programmes involved should be refocused to reflect this.
- Coherence should be strengthened to ensure that EU's external policies are mutually supportive and also in coherence with EU's internal policies.
- Member States should aim to establish a common position or view in international fora where international development policy is established. Member States should continue to exercise their responsibilities in international development organisations in accordance with their membership but respect common policy positions adopted by the EU. They should maintain their individual representation in third countries to implement national development programmes effectively.
- The administrative and legal instruments for managing EC development programmes should be simplified and harmonised with a significant reduction of regional and sector regulations and greater autonomy given to the Commission for managing its activities.
- The importance given to development objectives should be reflected in resource allocation, which should be done through a longer-term, strategic approach, based on objective criteria.
- Handling of the EDF needs to be further studied. Significant improvements to the effectiveness and poverty focus of EC development programmes would need to be guaranteed before consideration of integrating the EDF into the EU budget.